

Is Salt the New Chlorine?

By Rafael Sandoval

Whether you have kids, enjoy throwing parties or want to beat the summer heat, having a backyard pool may be the perfect amenity for your home. However, pools can come with some major drawbacks such as the large amounts of chemicals required to keep the pool clean and germ-free. An alternative to chlorine, salt has proven to be both cost effective and eco-friendly. Many people do not realize that the chlorine used as a pool disinfectant is widely recognized as a health hazard. Chlorine increases the risk of developing allergies and asthma. For adults, chlorine has been linked to bladder and rectal cancer and is believed to also increase the risk of birth defects in pregnant women. Although it may not be for everyone, saltwater pools offer many benefits when compared to chlorine pools.

On average, pool chemicals can run roughly \$50 to \$60 per month and sometimes will not even get the job done. The cost of switching to a saltwater pumping system is reasonable and the money saved from not having to stock up your arsenal eventually pays for the system.

Another appealing aspect of saltwater pools is their eco-friendly decontamination system and the positive effects on the human body. Salt creates natural chlorine that sanitizes the water. Reducing the amount of hazardous chemicals, makes saltwater pools are safer for the environment. Although technically considered a saltwater pool, the lower salinity levels do not make it seem as if you're swimming in the ocean. Your eyes will not burn as much as chlorine will and the water does not taste salty. Saltwater will also leave the skin and hair fresher and will not bleach and fade clothing as chlorine does. Salt will not evaporate with the water like chlorine. Although there are many advantages, salt water pools do come with some cons. The saltwater corrodes metal railings and metal pool furniture. Saltwater pools leave a calcium buildup when calcium accumulates on the pump's titanium plates. This requires regular skimming.

Despite corrosive characteristics and calcium buildup, saltwater pools are slowly becoming the main alternative to chlorine pools. In the long-run, saltwater pools save money by eliminating the dependency on disinfecting chemicals and make the pool safer for the environment.